



At NoMU we have been burning the midnight oil in order to complete all our orders before moving into our brand new factory. A few nights ago we were packing our sweet rub, and the wonderful scent of cinnamon that had filled the air became the inspiration for this month's spice files.

It seems like everyone is hectic at this time of the year, including our brilliant photographer, who has been fully booked – which has meant that I've had to shoot all of this month's images myself! I promise to book Robbert way in advance in the future.

Of course, I couldn't resist including a Xmas left-over recipe or two – but they'll definitely come in handy! We wish you the happiest festive season. Enjoy!

Tracy



SPICE FILES



The sweet, woody smell of cinnamon has been intoxicating people for five thousand years, ever since the Arabs brought it back from what were then the Spice Islands, to sell in Babylon, Egypt and Rome. The spice comes from the dried inner bark of an evergreen tree which is indigenous to Sri Lanka and has many more uses than the humble apple pie. The Egyptians used the exotic spice in their embalming rituals, the Romans used it as a love potion and Nero burned a year's worth in tribute to his deceased wife. Even Moses used cinnamon in a holy oil to anoint the ark. By the 11th Century, spices were so highly valued that they were used in place of currency!

Not only does cinnamon taste great, but scientists have discovered that the spice reduces blood sugar levels by mimicking insulin, making it a vital ingredient for diabetics. Cinnamon is often confused with cassia, which is considered slightly inferior in taste. Cassia cinnamon is normally a darker, reddish brown colour and has a stronger, somewhat bittersweet flavour.

RECIPES

chanterelle on toast

250g chanterelle mushrooms
A splash of olive oil
A knob of butter
NoMU One for All
NoMU just salt
NoMU just pepper
4 slices sourdough bread
1 whole peeled clove of garlic

Garnish with deep-fried sage. (Optional)

After grilling the bread on both sides lightly, rub one side with garlic, drizzle with olive oil and set aside.

In a pan heat the olive oil and butter and a few good grinds of One for All. Sauté the mushrooms over high heat until browned and just cooked. Remove from heat and season well with salt and pepper. Top the bruschetta with the warm chanterelles and serve immediately.

TIP 1: Whatever you do, do not wash the mushrooms. If they do have some soil on them, gently wipe or brush them instead. Mushrooms are like sponges and will immediately absorb any water with which they come into contact.

TIP 2: Season with salt after cooking to avoid moisture being drawn out the mushrooms.



asparagus & cheat's hollandaise

1 large bunch young asparagus spears
3 x-large egg yolks
2 tbsp lemon juice
1 tbsp white wine vinegar
175g warm butter
NoMU just salt
NoMU just pepper

Blend the egg yolks in a blender or processor until well mixed. In a small saucepan, heat the lemon juice and vinegar and, with the motor running, add in a slow thin stream to the eggs. In the same saucepan, melt the butter until foaming. Once again, with the motor running, very slowly add the butter to the egg mixture. The slower the better! Season with salt and pepper. Trim 2 – 3 cm from the bottom of the asparagus before peeling. Blanch in salted boiling water for 3 – 5 minutes. Drain and serve immediately with hollandaise and a sprinkling of cracked pepper. Note: Cooking time will vary depending on the thickness of the asparagus spears.

vietnamese turkey salad



Predictable I know! I just couldn't resist giving you at least one left-over turkey recipe. As we all tend to over-indulge during Christmas, this is also the perfect summer lunch as it is light, refreshing and zingy – and completely fat-free! Trust me, you'll love it! If you do not have turkey, it is even more scrumptious using gently poached chicken breast or even the breasts of ready-made rotisserie chicken.

500g shredded left-over turkey
1 cucumber, peeled.
100g bean sprouts
1 large red onion or 3 shallots
a large bunch of coriander, washed and dried.
a handful of Vietnamese mint, if available.
1 tsp roasted sesame seeds – optional

Using a potato peeler, slice long slivers of cucumber flesh, avoiding the seeds.

Slice the onion into very thin slices.
Place all the ingredients in a bowl.

Dressing

3 tbsp fish sauce
juice of 2 limes
2 tsp sugar
2 large red chillies thinly sliced into long strips
1 tsp finely chopped garlic
1 tsp grated ginger

Combine all the dressing ingredients and stir to dissolve the sugar. Pour over the salad, toss well to ensure that all ingredients are well coated. Grab your chopsticks and tuck in!

pandora bread & butter pudding

I discovered this recipe by chance last Christmas. I intended to make mince pies for Christmas Eve, but thanks to last minute gift shopping, I ran out of time and decided to change tact. Besides, the idea of sitting down with a glass of champagne was far more appealing at the time than making pastry! Still needing to whip up a decadent dessert, the following scrumptious creation was born. It's also the perfect way to use up left-over Christmas mince. Pandora is a delicious Italian cake, similar to panetone, but without the fruit.

500g pandora, sliced into 1cm thick slices
475g (1 jar) good quality fruit mince
6 eggs
4 cups full cream milk
1 tsp **NoMU Vanilla Extract**
zest of one orange
½ cup caster sugar
2 tbsp **NoMU Sweet Rub**

Preheat your oven to 160°C.

Spread the fruit mince onto one side of the sliced pandora.
Arrange in layers in a buttered baking dish.

In a bowl, whisk the eggs, milk, vanilla extract, sugar, sweet rub and zest and pour over the pandora. Sprinkle with extra caster sugar and bake for 50-60 minutes until the custard is just set and the pandora is nicely browned on top.

Serve hot with cream and cherries.



BACK TO BASICS



Whenever I'm at a loss for what to serve for dessert, I poach! It's simple, light, refreshing and fool-proof. In fact, Paul's grandmother, Celie Raphaely, taught me that you can freeze poached peaches as they defrost perfectly! So make the most of what's in season and get poaching!

poached peaches in prosecco

1 bottle Prosecco (Italian "champagne")
1 cup caster sugar
1 stick of cinnamon
5 pumps **NoMU vanilla paste**
1 dozen ripe but firm peaches or nectarines.

In a large saucepan, place the Prosecco, sugar, cinnamon and vanilla. Once the sugar has dissolved, add the peaches and gently simmer for 30 – 45 minutes. Cooking time will vary depending on the ripeness of the fruit. To test if the peaches are ready, pierce with a sharp knife. They should be soft, but firm.

Serve with cream and sweet-rubbed pastries.

Sweet-rubbed pastries

1 sheet/500g ready made puff pastry
25 g unsalted butter, melted
¼ cup **NoMU sweet rub**

Pre-heat oven to 200°C. Roll your pastry to a thickness of 5mm. Brush lightly with butter. Sprinkle liberally with sweet rub. Slice into any shape you please, I often do long elongated triangles. Place onto a baking sheet and bake for 20 minutes or until puffed up and golden brown.